

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 212446
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DRAFTED BY S/S-O:R.PERITO

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 212446

NODIS

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI

FOL REPEAT HAVANA 0042 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 5 SEP.

QUOTE

S E C R E T HAVANA 0042

NODIS

FOR ARA ASST. SECRETARY TODMAN FROM GLEYSTEN

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CU

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH CASTRO

1. SHORTLY AFTER RETURNING TO HAVANA SUNDAY EVENING FROM BRIEF TOUR OF MATANZAS AND CIENFUEGOS I RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM MY OFFICIAL ESCORT SAYING THAT CASTRO WISHED TO SEE ME AT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE AND COULD I AND MY WIFE BE READY IN TEN MINUTES.

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2 WE WERE RECEIVED IN CASTRO'S OFFICE. THE CONVERSATION LASTED TWO HOURS AND MAINLY WAS A CASTRO MONOLOGUE ON CUBAN EDUCATION.

3. CASTRO SAID HE ASKED ME TO COME AND TALK WITH HIM BECAUSE HE HAD HEARD I WAS LEAVING CUBAN AFFAIRS AND HE WANTED TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR THE WAY I HAD HELPED TO BREAK THE LOG-JAM.

4. OF SUBSTANTIVE INTEREST, CASTRO SAID:

--HE IS SATISFIED THE WAY US-CUBAN RELATIONS ARE DEVELOPING;
--PANAMA IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN CUBA NOW AND RATIFICATION OF THE TREATY SHOULD COME FIRST;
--HE HAS GREAT RESPECT FOR PRESIDENT CARTER BECAUSE OF HIS STAND ON ENERGY WHICH IS THE CRITICAL ISSUE FOR MANKIND, BUT HE DOUBTS CARTER WILL BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING SUBSTANTIAL ABOUT IT UNTIL HIS SECOND TERM;
--THE US MUST EXERT LEADERSHIP ON ENERGY AND RAW MATERIALS OR NORTH-SOUTH TENSIONS WILL ERUPT;
--HE THINKS WE SHOULD COOPERATE WITH THE SOVIETS ON THIS AS WELL AS ON THE MORE OBVIOUS ISSUES OF AVOIDING MILITARY CONFLICT AND WASTEFUL MILITARY SPENDING;
--CUBA INTENDS TO SEND 1,000 INSTRUCTORS TO ANGOLA IN THE EARLY PART OF 1978 TO TEACH MATHEMATICS AND OTHER PHYSICAL SCIENCES;
--IT COSTS CUBA \$10 MILLION PER YEAR IN HARD CURRENCY TO MAINTAIN 20,000 CUBANS IN AFRICA. FOOD AND LODGING ARE PAID BY HOSTS AND SALARIES ARE BANKED IN CUBA.
--HE IS WORRIED ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER'S PHYSICAL SAFETY BECAUSE OF CUBAN EXILE AND QUEBECOIS TERRORISTS. THE TERRORISTS ARE NOT FANATICS IN THE RELIGIOUS SENSE, BUT THRIVE ON PUBLICITY. HE BELIEVES OUR INSTINCTS ON THIS ISSUE ARE RIGHT. BUT HE IS CONCERNED WHETHER WE CAN HANDLE IT. HE WAS ANNOYED BY THE US LEAK ON EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON TERRORISM.

5. IN GENERAL CASTRO PROJECTED GREATER CONCERN ABOUT
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CUBAN INTERNAL ISSUES THAN FOREIGN RELATIONS, AND THIS CONCERN WAS FOCUSED ON HAVANA'S ALREADY BEING TOO BIG, TOO URBAN, AND TOO ATTRACTED BY THE AMENITIES OF LIFE.

6.COMMENT: CASTRO DID NOT SEEM TO WISH TO CONVEY ANY PRACTICAL POINTS THROUGH ME AND MUCH OF WHAT HE SAID IS A REPEAT OF HIS TALKS WITH SENATOR CHURCH.

7. I TRIED TO GET LYLE LANE INCLUDED, BUT WAS FIRMLY TOLD THAT THE INTERVIEW WAS A PERSONAL GESTURE AND ONLY MYSELF AND ELISABETH WERE EXPECTED.

8. MY TOUR OF MATANZAS AND CIENFUEGOS WAS HIGHLY ORGANIZED AND TOP OR SECONDARY LOCAL OFFICIALS WERE ROPED-IN AS GUIDES, INCLUDING FIDEL'S BROTHER, RAMON. A SPECIAL PLANE WAS SENT TO CIENFUEGOS TO BRING US BACK TO HAVANA ON SEPTEMBER 4.
LANE

UNQUOTE VANCE

SECRET

NNN

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